

**ON THE ISSUE OF STUDYING THE AESTHETICAL RESOURCES OF
THE LANGUAGE (BASED ON THE MATERIAL OF THE GENDER
CATEGORY OF THE RUSSIAN SUBSTANTIVES)**

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ABSTRACT

The paper is dedicated to one of the topical issues of the modern linguistics – aesthetical resources of the linguistic units used in the fiction literature. However, this issue still remains under investigated and disputable. The morphologic category of the substantive gender has also been not completely covered from the perspective of description of its aesthetical capacities which determined our reference to this problematic. The literary works of the 19th-20th centuries were used as the material for analysis. As the main linguistic methods we used: the descriptive-analytical, semantic-stylistic, distributive, method of component analysis. During the study the author's interpretation of the aesthetic potential of linguistic units has been developed suggesting orientation towards the aesthetical as the most common, comprehensive category of aesthetics. On the basis of this concept the aesthetic options of the grammar gender of substantives have been studied. The aspects of analysis of substantive lexemes as aesthetically-relevant elements of a literary text have been specified. There were determined the factors existing in the language that facilitate the fulfillment of the aesthetic potencies of the grammar gender of substantives. The results obtained confirm: aesthetic resources of the gender category are rather wide and various, substantives considered from the perspective of the relevant grammar attribute are used not only as constructional elements of a text but also as linguistic means participating in formation of the basic categories of a literary work as a complete aesthetic object.

Keywords: literary text, aesthetical resources of the linguistic units, the category of gender of Russian substantives, aspects of analyzes of aesthetic potential of the grammar gender, fulfillment of aesthetic potencies of the gender category

1. INTRODUCTION

Investigation of aesthetic potential of a language including its morphologic subsystem constitutes one of the complicated tasks of philology since analysis of a linguistic identity with its values represents one of the topical trends of the modern linguistic science. Aesthetic resources of linguistic units used in fiction have been the object of regard of a number of linguists; however, many issues relating to this area of scientific surveys are still far from being finally resolved. In the sphere of linguistic knowledge there are still no scientifically substantiated conclusions that would allow answering the following questions: 1) what the essence of the concept 'aesthetically resources of linguistic units' is b) which factors determine the aesthetic effect of the linguistic units on the recipient; c) what the aspects of studying the aesthetic resources of linguistic elements are; d) in which way it is possible to comprehensively describe languages representing different systems as well as compare them within the frameworks of the problem specified, etc.

The lack of integral approach to the study of the problem raises concerns in researchers. The understanding of aesthetics of linguistic units from the specified pride perspective suggests not only the use of the main linguistic conceptual terminological research tools but also of wider information of humanitarian nature – relating to theory and history of literature, aesthetics. Thus, analysis of the problem from a linguist's perspective allows gaining insight into all inherent linguistic mechanisms of creation of aesthetic effects. Involvement of scientific information from the area of literary studies allows considering the basic categories of a literary work in terms of their relation to the language. Consequently, the use of the integral analysis of linguistic units suggesting description of the language of a literary work as the language of art is determined by the specifics of the subject of the study itself.

The issue of the aesthetic capabilities of linguistic units from the perspective of their level of organization is also relevant. In this regard it should be mentioned that the most frequent attempts to cover particular aspects of the problem under consideration were made in respect of elements of the lexical, syntax and phonetic subsystems of the Russian language. Morphologic means of the language are the most underinvestigated ones from the perspective of fulfillment of their aesthetic resources. Moreover, the attitude to this problem on the part of different researchers due to inconsistency of their reasoning does not promote to creation of a clear idea of aesthetic capabilities of the morphological subsystem. A number of researches rather guardedly assess the capabilities of morphological units within the context considered or even withhold the morphological means the ability to possess aesthetic functions. The result of such traditional approach to evaluation of stylistic resources of the morphologic subsystem shall be considered to be the incompleteness of representation thereof in the existing classifications of stylistic approaches.

The review of linguistic works showed that the issue of aesthetic resources of morphologic means of the Russian language has not gained complete comprehensive coverage. The issue of aesthetics of linguistic units in whole also remains under investigated and disputable. Still there is no commonly accepted definition of the term 'aesthetics of linguistic units'. Getting to know the studies of researchers on this subject revealed a lot of different approaches to solution of the issue. The range of opinions is rather diverse: from the widest approach to understanding of aesthetics of linguistic units when the content of the term is almost brought to naught to relatively narrow interpretations.

Quite common is the viewpoint of researches (for example, G.O.Vinokur, A.I. Gorshkov, L.A.Novikov, G.G.Shpet) according to which aesthetic functions of linguistic means are determined by their figurative capabilities. According to L.A.Novikov, this is to a great extent determined by the value of an aesthetic sign which represents a complex verbal and

cognitive process of interaction of the direct and figurative meanings, sudden closure and release thereof, overlapping creating literary diversity. 'The essence of the aesthetic sign meaning is expression of the special, individual-unique, topical ad hoc'. By interacting with semantics of other units, a word as an aesthetically relevant of a literary work is the carrier of not only intellectual and emotive information but the structure and idea of the whole as well [1].

According to D. N. Shmelev, the aesthetic function of linguistic units is implemented in the cases when the speaker or writer: a) evaluates the method of expression used by him; b) uses the figurative capabilities of a language; c) draws attention to the phonetic patterns of the speech; d) actualizes the linguistic motivation of the idioms [2].

L. I. Donetskih believes that the aesthetic meaning of a linguistic unit is not a one-dimensional but a multidimensional concept divided into types and forms. There are different approaches to the typology of this concept: one may take into account the types of lexical meanings of a word, the character of actualizers, genre of a literary work, etc. By characterizing the aesthetic properties of linguistic units the researcher's attention is focused primarily on their lexical semantics; the aesthetically relevant attributes of a word distinguished as the basic ones are: suddenness, novelty, individual uniqueness [3].

According to V. P. Moskvina, the aesthetic function of a language is related to expression of emotions of delight and gloat, to the ability of the speech to attract us by its beauty [4].

In most studies of the last 10-15 years (for example, [5; 6; 7]) the aesthetic properties of linguistic units are also considered in the context of representation of the category of beautiful or within the context of the issue of figurativeness of a literary text. Reference to the studies of the related content is of interest. A close relationship to the issue of the linguistic aesthetics is demonstrated by the studies of functioning of linguistic units in a text (ref., for example, [8; 9; 10; 11; 12; 13]).

However, despite the increased attention of linguists to the issue under consideration still there is no such a conceptual approach to investigating thereof established that could be supported by most of the scientific society. The problem of aesthetic resources of the grammar gender of substantives based on the single concept of description of the linguistic units' aesthetics has also not being set by researchers yet which determined our reference to this subject.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The material used for research included literary sources – prosaic and poetic works primarily of the 19th and 20th centuries. The methods of the study conducted by us were determined by the integral approach to analysis of linguistic units. As the main linguistic methods we used: the descriptive-analytical, semantic-stylistic, distributive, method of component analysis.

3. RESULT

In our opinion, analysis of aesthetic capabilities of linguistic units including substantives with account for their belonging to a particular grammar gender requires the use of the integrative approach. Its theoretical basis shall be formed not only by works on linguistics but also the related scientific areas: aesthetics, literature studies, psychology. We believe that within the frameworks of the approach specified the most appropriate method is the wide understanding of aesthetic resources of linguistic units suggesting orientation towards the aesthetic category. As is known, it was established as an independent category relatively lately - in the 20th century. This category represents the general that is peculiar to more specific modifications thereof: beautiful, exalted, tragic, comic.

We believe that the aesthetic resources are peculiar to those linguistic units that may exert aesthetic effect on a person as an addressee of the communication. The essence of aesthetic effect of linguistic units being elements of a literary work consists in the fact that by getting acquainted with a piece of verbal art a reader gets a spiritual pleasing experience, i. e., experiences a sensual-rational feeling the main components of which are aesthetic pleasure, feeling the joy, completeness of being. Such a state is also determined by the attributes of linguistic units themselves and specifics of the use thereof, namely the novelty, figurativeness, flexibility, relatedness to the entire literary work as a complete aesthetic object, ability to completely and accurately embody the conceptual-literary intention of the author.

The aesthetics of the language of a literary work is predetermined by aesthetic capabilities of a linguistic system. We suggest that the aesthetics of linguistic system elements including the morphological means is determined by a set of factors that include:

- a number of attributes of a language as a complex dynamic system;
- the law of asymmetry of a linguistic sign;
- the national specifics of a language determining the basic principles of modeling the world in the linguistic consciousness of the speakers, originality of units of each language level, ability of a linguistic unit to be associated with any other sequences of other units based on the criterion of semantic or formal similarity;
- inner regularities of the language development (antinomy of the speaker and listener, system and standard, code and text, regularity and expressivity);
- the range of the image-emotional, stylistic capacities, namely the inventory as well as potential capacities of the phonostylistics means; variety and diversity of the lexical-phraseological fund of the language in whole and image-emotional units in particular; degree of development, flexibility of grammar structures (the system of grammar oppositions, maturity of the paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships, transposition options).

Within the context of actualization of morphological aesthetic resources, in our opinion, the following actors are the most relevant ones: existence in the modern Russian language of elements particular to the grammar system of the archaic period (the declension of nouns, within the system of classes of verbs, conjugation, etc.); the law of asymmetry of a linguistic sign (shown in particular in the phenomenon of transitivity of parts of the speech); ability of the grammar unit to be associated with sequences of other units as demonstration of the national originality of the language; antinomy of the system and standard, regularity and expressivity acting as inner regularities of the language development, options of the grammar variability and synonymy.

Implementation of aesthetic resources of morphologic units as elements of other linguistic levels also depends on the particular traditions of their use; specifics of development of literary processes within the particular society; originality of the mythos-poetic component of the national mentality; the nature of development of the linguistic competence of the language speakers, their artistic-aesthetic tastes, preferences, etc. [14].

Determination of aesthetic capacities of morphologic means being the issue of an integral, interdisciplinary nature is aligned with the sphere of linguistics within which the approaches to the description of grammar that arose at the end of the 20th century and aimed at analyzing its international character and creativity were formed. The system study of morphologic units based on the aesthetic categories in close relationship to the main aesthetic categories characterizes the new approach to the study of the Russian grammar in terms of description of its aesthetic resources.

In this regard the morphologic category of the substantive gender is of interest since it is traditionally considered as a three-term non-inflectional category featuring syntactic relevance. This thesis is confirmed by many years of tradition of the study of expressiveness of the grammar gender of substantives within the frameworks of the grammar stylistics, poetic morphology, etc.

Analysis of aesthetic potential of the substantive gender may be performed based on a number of criteria. Among which are the study of the factors (prerequisites) existing in the language that facilitate the implementation of the aesthetic capacities of the substantive gender; analysis of actualization of the gender resources with regard to the presentation of the particular aesthetic category (for example, comic, exalted), creation of a literary image, the use of figures of speech as a technique of compositional organization of a literary text. In this paper we consider the first of the mentioned research aspects.

1. *Aesthetic capacities are peculiar to substantives featuring inconsistency between the external part of the sign and the translated semantic part. The following shall be referred to such lexemes: male substantives with a zero ending like a) человек, врач, фотограф, редактор (a man, a doctor, a photograph, an editor) that nominate both the male and female persons; b) words of common gender (тихоня, лежебока, бродяга) (a goody-goody, a couch potato, street people); c) female nouns used in figurative meaning to denote males (баба, жаба, тряпка, шляпа) (a woman, a fish face, a nincompoop, a loser). Different techniques of use of such words in a literary text cause comic response of a reader. Besides, these substantives may act as speech characteristic of a character.*

2. *Aesthetic realization of some substantives is determined by their gender variability. It is known that in the 18th - the beginning of the 20th century quite a large number of substantives was used now in one now in the other gender. In some substantives such alterations in gender have been preserved until now: рельс – рельса (a rail, m – f), жираф – жирафа (a giraffe, m – f). However, in the modern Russian language variability of nouns related to the gender category fades away gradually. Many nouns that back in the day fell within the area of gender variability are used in the form of a single gender. However, alterations in the gender of such substantives as облако, лебедь, жираф (a cloud, a swan, a giraffe, etc.) are one of the factors determining the aesthetically relevant use thereof in a literary text, for example: And the glory was floating like a swan / through a golden smoke (A. Akhmatova. 'A string of quatrains'). The analysis shows: in this fragment of the texts like in most of other cases the main load in terms of realization of aesthetic capacities is carried by the units of the lexical linguistic level. At the same time the role of the grammar means cannot be denied: due to the use of the female substantive лебедь (a swan) the identity of the grammar execution of an object and image being compared is emphasized which enhances the image-illustrative properties of a poetic text.*

3. *Aesthetic understanding from the perspective of the grammar gender may be applied to homonymy of the root morphemes of substantives belonging to different gender groups: гранат – граната (a pomegranate – a grenade), еж – ежевика (a hedgehog – a blackberry), осен – оса (a donkey – a wasp), пастор – паста (a pastor – a paste), селезень – селезенка (a cock duck – a spleen), etc. It makes sense to consider the linguistic units approximated in a text – usually the male and female nouns – as quasi-gender correlates facilitating the expression of the author's emotiveness (mostly comical one), creation of unexpected associations and solutions by means of imitating the achievement of the gender identity according to the biological sex.*

4. *The next prerequisite allowing implementing aesthetic capacities of the gender category is the similarity of the substantive flexions referring to different gender groups (uncle – aunt, day – night). Homonymy of endings of the male and female nouns may, for example, be played upon as the result of the intentional connection of such lexemes as part of an allusion or allogism as aesthetically relevant techniques of narrative-compositional organization of poetic diction.*

5. *Another relevant factor is the semantic heterogeneity of linguistic units constituting the gender groups of substantives. It is referred to two groups of substantives – male and female. In each of the mentioned grammar groups there are, firstly, lexemes incorporating the denotative component of the gender meaning that is related to indication of the gender of a living creature, and, secondly, words that do not include this component. The semantic heterogeneity in each group of the subject-related lexemes upon presence of their equivalence from the perspective of relatedness to the same gender determines the possibility of the aesthetic use of these linguistic units.*

The literary texts contain a lot of examples confirming this thesis: There is a town with a wax wall, / With a chamber from titles and illuminations, / Where the widows Eyelashes live / Together with the portress – kind Freckle... (N. Klyuev 'The White Tale'); And in the room where the table rules / there is a stove – silver lioness (B. Akhmadullina. 'It is about time, goodbye, my rock...'); he was staring at his aspen, such a beauty, staring and trying to remember what the connection between it and the remote tractor roaring was. (V. Belov. 'Commonplace'). As is known, the inanimate female nouns ресница (eyelash), родинка (freckle), печь (stove), осина (aspen) in the system of the language do not have the denotative component of the grammatical meaning of a gender. However, in the fiction language due to intentional approximation thereof to the animate female nouns featuring the semantic attribute of a gender such words gain a quasi-denotative component with the corresponding meaning which attach such properties as brightness, clearness, demonstrativeness and realism.

6. *Another factor determining the aesthetic use of the nouns is the absence of the gender correlates in a significant number of both male and female nouns (for example, президент, a president, a sergeant, a whale, a crucian carp; a manicurist, a shark, a squirrel, a fly). Lacunarity of the grammatical system of the Russian language within the specified context simulates the word-creative activity of the writers in cases when the necessity of the differentiated denotation of a person or an animal specimen of a particular gender arises.*

During the word-creating process the occasional female nouns are most frequently formed that are created on the basis of the existing word-forming patterns (a stem of a male noun + corresponding affix). For example: арпескопка (from the male noun арпескоп (aggressor)) [A. Voznesenski], властелинша (from the word властелин (lord)) [N. Zabolotski], палачиха (from палач (executioner)) [I. Annenski], пекариха (from пекарь (baker)) [V. Astafyev], фотографша, фотографина (from фотограф (photographer)) [V. Aksenov]; бекасиха (from бекас (snipe)) [M. Prishvin], комариха (from комар (mosquito)) [D. Prigov], коршунница (from коршун (kite)) [O. Mandelshtam], рачица (from рак crayfish) [S. Mikhalkov], соловыха (from соловей (nightingale)) [B. Kornilov], etc.

A smaller group of neologisms is represented by male nouns formed from the female substantives: нянь (occasional derivative from the female noun няня (nurse)) [V. Mayakovskij], посудомой (from the word посудомойка (washer-up)) [M. Mishin]; куропат (from the substantive куропатка (partridge)) [A. Ivanov], кукух (from кукушка (cuckoo)) [A. Levin], лягух (from лягушка (frog)) [V. Sosnora].

Analysis of the works of the Russian literature shows that the occasional gender correlates due to their novelty and expressivity along with the other linguistic units directly participate in the implementation of the author's intention. By means of using the words under consideration, in particular, the author's emotional attitude to the literature characters is expressed, for example: By the end of the day <...> gathered <...> the friends of Emma, Stella and Agrippina that were accompanying the malicious **photographers (фотографинь)**. (V. Aksenov. 'Say raisin').

4. SUMMARY

One of the aspects of our study was determination of prerequisites existing in the language itself that facilitate the implementation of the aesthetic resources of grammatical gender. Analysis of the linguistic units within this context allows establishing that the following peculiarities of the grammatical system of the Russian language may be considered as the specified prerequisites:

- the presence of nouns featuring inconsistency between the external part of the sign and the translated semantic part thereof (from this perspective the high aesthetic productivity is typical for male substantives with a zero ending like **человек, врач** (a man, a doctor); words of common gender);
- gender variability as one of the distinctive features of historical or modern in the language of some object lexemes (**облако – облак**; (a cloud), **лебедь** (male) – **лебедь** (female) – a swan; **жираф – жирафа** (a giraffe);
- homonymy of root morphemes in the nouns of different genders (**пастор – паста** (pastor – paste), **осел – оса** (donkey – wasp));
- similarity of the noun flections belonging to different gender groups (**дядя – тетя** (uncle - aunt), **день – ночь** (day – night) ;
- heterogeneity of composition of the substantive gender groups from the perspective of their grammatical meaning;
- absence of correlates by the criterion 'gender – sex' in some object lexemes.

The results obtained during the study allow summarizing the following: analysis of substantives from the perspective of their grammatical gender attribute has proved the appropriateness of interpretation of aesthetic resources of linguistic units (including morphological means) proposed by us, the possibility of the use thereof by describing the language of a literature work as a complete aesthetic object. The study of the morphological category of substantive gender allows stating that the aesthetic resources of the morphological gender category are rather wide and diverse which allows using the grammatical linguistic units not only as constructional elements of a text but also as linguistic means participating in formation of a particular aesthetic category, in formation of the systems of images, in the compositional organization of a literary work.

The results of analysis of the aesthetic potential of the Russian morphological units may be used as the basis for further studies of the aesthetic capacities of different languages which is necessary for the development of the issues of comparative statistics, theory of translation as the basis for improvement of the translating activity.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author confirms that the data provided does not constitute a conflict of interests.

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